

REMARKS

Claims 1-7 and 9 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, claim 8 is canceled without prejudice to or disclaimer of the subject matter recited therein.

I. Restriction Requirement

Applicant appreciates the withdrawal of the Restriction Requirement and the examination of claims 1-9.

II. Allowable Subject Matter

The indication of allowable subject matter in claims 3 and 4 is appreciated, they being allowable if rewritten in independent form to include all of the features of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 3 and 4, as well as the remaining pending claims, are in condition for allowance for the reasons discussed below.

III. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1 and 5-9 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,070,867 to Tsurumi et al. (Tsurumi). As claim 8 is canceled, the rejection to that claim is moot. As there is no indication of claim 2 being rejected, it is assumed that there is no objection or rejection of claim 2 and therefore it too is in condition for allowance upon allowance of its base claim. The rejection of claims 1, 5-7 and 9 is respectfully traversed.

Tsurumi fails to disclose each and every feature recited in the rejected claims. For example, Tsurumi fails to disclose or suggest a rotary clutch device, comprising a tooth-partially-lacking gear that can mesh with a drive gear and is given initial rotation force; a rotatable cam body that is concentric with the tooth-partially-lacking gear, having an engagement step; and an elastic body; wherein an engagement lever is engaged with and disengaged from the engagement step according to an intermittent operation of an actuator so that the tooth-partially-lacking gear starts and stops to rotate; and rotation force of the tooth-

partially-lacking gear is transmitted to the cam body via the elastic body, as recited in claim 1 or the similar features recited in the remaining rejected claims.

Tsurumi discloses a drive controlling apparatus for controlling the supply of sheets in an image forming device (col. 1, lines 5-8). The drive control apparatus includes first and second notched gears 14, 6 which are engaged by the drive gear 4. The first notched gear 14 is attached to the rotary shaft 12. The second notched gear 6 includes a key-way 5 loosely fitted on a key portion 12a of the rotary shaft 12 so that the second notched gear 6 can be rotated within a predetermined range. The second notched gear 6 is also provided with a pawl portion 13 which extends through a slot 14a formed in the first notched gear 14 and is engaged or locked by a solenoid 7 (col. 5, lines 23-54; Fig. 1a).

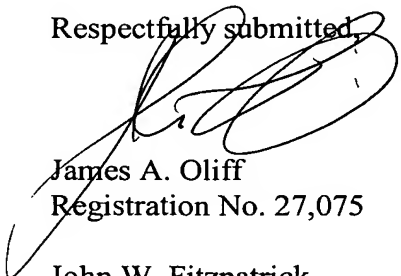
In contrast to Tsurumi which discloses that both of the first and second notched gears 14, 6 are driven by the drive gear 4 (see Fig. 1) the rejected claims recite that a rotation force of the tooth-partially-lacking gear is transmitted to the cam body via the elastic body. The drive control apparatus of Tsurumi clearly describes and the Figures illustrate that both of the first and second notched gears are driven by the drive gear 4 and the spring 10 of Tsurumi does not transmit the rotation force of the drive gear from the tooth partially lacking gear to the rotatable cam body. Rather, where the second notched gear is rotated to reach a first limit point in the key-way, the sidewall 5a of the key-way 5 abuts against the key portion 12a to rotate the first notched gear 14 together with the second notched gear 6 until the first notched gear is engaged by the drive gear 4. Thus, the rotational force of the tooth partially lacking gear is not transmitted to the cam body via the elastic body, but rather is transmitted via the shaft once the shaft end has engaged with the sidewall of the key-way in the second notched gear. As Tsurumi fails to disclose or suggest each and every feature recited in the rejected claims, withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

IV. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that this application is in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration and prompt allowance of claims 1-7 and 9 are earnestly solicited.

Should the Examiner believe that anything further would be desirable in order to place this application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number set forth below.

Respectfully submitted,



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